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A STUDY OF PERSISTING AND NONPERSISTING
CATHOLIC CLERGYMEN

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Psychology

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether or not priests who have resigned from the ministry can be differentiated from those who remain within it in terms of personality variables and person-environment interaction factors as expressed in Holland's theory of vocational choice.

Among Holland's basic assumptions are the following: 1) members of a vocation have similar personalities; and 2) vocational satisfaction and stability depend on the congruence between one's personality and the environment (mainly other people) in which one works. According to Holland, most people in our culture can be classified as one of six dominant types (Realistic, Intellectual, Social, Conventional, Enterprising, Artistic). People possess characteristics of all six types, but each person operates in such a manner as to reflect one of two of these types more strongly. In addition, Holland claims that there are six basic model environments that correspond to the personality types and bear the same labels.

In Holland's theory each model environment attracts that person whose dominant personality type is similar to the type associated with the environment. Congruent person-environment interactions (interaction of people and environments belonging to the same personality type or environmental model) lead to outcomes that are predictable from the knowledge of the personality types and the environmental model. These outcomes include vocational choice and vocational

stability. The consistency and homogeneity of an environment (people of the same personality type) affects stability of vocational choice.

Holland expands the number of categories in his classification system from six personality types to thirty by coding the highest type score and the second highest type score for the individual on his Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI). Personality code combinations are of two classes: 1) consistent--the highest types do not represent contradictory psychological attributes and promote stability of vocational choice; and 2) inconsistent--the two highest types indicate contradictory psychological attributes which will promote vocational changes and career instability.

Subjects for this study were fifty priests still active in the ministry and fifty resigned priests. Assessment measures included a biographical inventory, Holland's Vocational Preference Inventory, and the Adjective Check List.

Results of this study indicated that with regard to demographic characteristics of the samples, there were no significant differences in age, family's social position, number of children in the family, ordinal position, age at entrance to the seminary, or age at ordination to the priesthood. A marked similarity of profiles on the VPI of the active and resigned priests was found. Both groups had their highest profile peak on the Social type scale and the same two-digit high-point, consistent, personality combination Social-Artistic. Thus, the six personality-type scales of the VPI did not significantly discriminate between active and resigned priests. On the other hand, the

findings were supportive of Holland's general hypothesis that members of a vocation have similar personalities. Furthermore, the biographical data which showed that 80% of the resigned priests presently occupy social-model type occupations may be viewed as indicating an "intraclass change," namely, the selection of an occupation in the same general class as the original choice. On the Adjective Check List scales, resigned priests scored significantly higher on self-confidence, achievement, dominance, endurance, and order. Results suggest that further research takes into account the apparent homogeneity of interest patterns of the priesthood "environment" and seek the influential variables for "intraclass change" in terms of more specific situational and personological factors.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Increasing popular and professional attention is currently being given to the subject of "drop-outs" from the ranks of religious ministers (Bartlett, 1971). This attention has grown out of both an effort to understand the changing role of the minister within the churches and a more general interest in the function of the minister in modern technological society. The problem of ministerial resignees is presently experienced in the three major faiths: Jewish (Greenfield, 1969); Protestant (Covell, 1970; Jud et al., 1970; Bartlett, 1969); and Roman Catholic (Schallert & Kelley, 1970; O'Brien, 1969; Greeley, 1972).

Within the Roman Catholic Church, ministerial resignations have dramatically increased since the end of the Second Vatican Council (Schallert & Kelley, 1970), an assembly of the world's Catholic bishops gathered to discuss the problems of the Church (Abbott & Gallagher, 1966). It is estimated that between the years 1964 and 1970, 2 to 4%, something like 15,000 priests of the Roman Catholic world clergy have left the official ministry of the Church. The percentage for the number of American priests who have resigned is estimated to be 12% or more (NORC, 1971; Greeley, 1972).

The phenomenon of priests leaving the official ministry is

not something new in the history of the Church. However, in addition to a significant quantitative difference of priests leaving before and after the Second Vatican Council, there is indication of a qualitative difference. Furthermore, the negative bias toward leaving the official ministry which was once a stabilizing factor in a priest's vocation are not as powerful on the contemporary scene. In the past, the "drop-out" priest was looked upon as a disaffiliate, or even a "traitor" and many members of the institution looked upon him with negative feelings (Schallert & Kelley, 1970). Today, however, there is a greater tendency to understand and accept the personal factors and institutional difficulties which enter into a priest's decision to leave the active ministry.

From the sociological point of view, the Catholic Church may be looked upon as an autonomous corporate institution, hierarchically organized. In terms of its own self-image, the Church sees its members as sharing certain fundamental beliefs, a ritual expression of these beliefs, and an obligation of expressing these beliefs and cultic manifestations in the community. Church members have various established roles. One of these roles is that of the "priest." The official priesthood is perceived as consisting of those members who have received a ritually conferred ("sacerdotal ordination") permanent role of authority and responsibility in relation to the body of believers, the laity (Tageson, 1970). Priests are necessary to serve as the manpower to maintain the ecclesiastical structure. Thus, the role of the priest is an organizational role and his tasks are

regulated, in a codified and systemized way, by the Church institution itself in the most important aspects of it. As a result, "the organization does wholly absorb its clergy, even if the clergy do not wholly absorb the organization (Gannon, 1971, p. 74)." The priesthood role is perceived as a full-time occupation. As an unpublished working paper for a recent world synod of bishops stated: "Priestly ministry pervades the entire life of the priest. It is not a temporary or occasional occupation." Therefore, the life-style of the priest is greatly regulated, particularly is this true with regard to marriage. There exists for the Western Rite of the Roman Catholic Church an ecclesiastical law of "obligatory celibacy" which prohibits a priest to marry. In addition to the ecclesiastical legislation (Canon Law) regulating a priest's role and life-style, there are many diverse, at times subtle, expectations on the part of his superiors and on the part of the laity concerning what the priest should be and not be, should do and not do (Bartlett, 1971).

The priestly role is not lived in social isolation. Its performance takes place in the vortex of the prevailing social and cultural phenomena. Ellis (1971) has described this feature for the American scene. One important social event which has had a profound impact on the priesthood was the Second Vatican Council (O'Brien, 1971). In part due to its deliberations of questions formerly considered closed, problems concerning matters of belief and ethics, ecclesiastical authority, role conflicts in the performance of the ministry, obligatory celibacy, and contemporary social problems have

increased the pressures weighing on the occupant of the priestly role.

As Greeley (1972) has pointed out:

If one is going to understand the present problems of the American priesthood, one must realize that it has experienced the values, the behavior patterns, the leadership styles, and the goals of the past were jettisoned almost overnight. In the absence of both theory and the leadership to facilitate the acquisition of new styles, chaos is not too strong a word for the result (p. 24).

Research

Investigations to discover those characteristics which differentiate "persisters" from "nonpersisters" in the vocation to the Catholic priesthood have used seminarians, those students in training for the priesthood, as subjects and the overwhelming majority of these studies were undertaken prior to the Second Vatican Council. For a comprehensive bibliography of these studies, see Menges & Dittes (1965). Consequently, the present situation calls for a shift of focus from the question of perseverance in the training stage of the priesthood to the question of perseverance once that occupational role has been achieved. It is obvious that the priest's concerns are not centered around the problems of gaining access to and the status of the occupational role, but rather around the problems involved in fulfilling that role in contemporary society.

Consideration of contemporary factors involved in the current rate of resignations from the official priesthood are largely in the form of speculative assumptions and exhortations which obviously do not constitute empirical interpretations. Two investigations of a

more empirical nature are sociological studies (Schallert & Kelley, 1970; NORC, 1971).

Schallert and Kelley (1970), employing an open-ended interview technique, and reporting their findings in a context heavily interwoven with their theoretical interpretations, characterized the resigned priest as one who is: strongly oriented toward change, deeply aware of the subjective dimension of self; manifests a significant degree of alienation, especially in the dimension of powerlessness.

The other study (NORC, 1971) is the result of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops authorizing a special investigation of the American priestly ministry. A summary of this, as yet, unpublished NORC (National Opinion Research Center) report was presented for discussion to the American Catholic bishops at their general meeting in April, 1971. Recently, Greeley (1972) has published some excerpts of the findings, as reported in the above mentioned summary, together with some of his reflections. The study employed questionnaire and interview techniques and the results contained in the abbreviated report indicated that: 1) the two reasons most frequently given for resignation by resignees are inability to live within the ecclesiastical government structure of the Church and the desire to marry; 2) resignees do not regret their decision to leave; 3) many resignees still see themselves belonging to the Church in some way; 4) many find more satisfaction in their present careers than they did in their priesthood work; 5) resigned priests differ from the still active official priests in attitudes concerning some ethical, social, and

belief questions. A more complete analysis of this NORC study must await its publication.

In addition, Greeley (1972) mentioned that simultaneous with the NORC research, a psychological study of priests still active in the ministry was conducted. One instrument employed was Shostrom's (1966) Personal Orientation Inventory (POI). This instrument is supposed to reflect an individual's positive mental health attributes in terms of humanistic, existential, and growth concepts. A primary influence on its construction is Maslow's (1954) conceptualization of "self-actualization." One finding was that there is a slight relationship between an "inner-directed" personality score (one "guided by internal motivations rather than external influences") and an inclination to resign from the priesthood. Thus,

. . . it appears that there is a tendency for resignees to be hyperactualized, and for those who remain to be hypoactualized. In other words, some of those who leave the priesthood show excessive needs for independence, and some of those who stay show excessive needs for dependence, which suggests that some men leave because they are overactualized and some men stay because they are underactualized (Greeley, 1972, p. 43).

This psychological study of active priests has not been published. It is therefore impossible to give the data with regard to the scores or the interrelationships found.

Career-Changing

Career-changing is not a unique phenomenon in society. People frequently change roles or positions, sometimes voluntarily, sometimes involuntarily. But, as Hinrichs (1970) notes, the important problem of turnover in the "world of work" needs more research. He

states:

Research to tie down systematically more of the individual difference factors and environmental moderators explaining turnover variance could be quite useful both to organizations to reduce their manpower costs and to individuals to reduce the disruption often associated with job changes (p. 544).

Research to investigate the individual difference factors and environmental variables differentiating resigned priests from those still active in the official ministry would appear to be quite useful. From a pragmatic point of view, it would prove helpful to the institution for questions associated with recruitment, selection, training, and institutional reforms. From a clinical perspective, it would deliver information useful in the counseling of those who stay in and those who leave the active ministry. Concerning the broader interests of psychology, such research could provide data for use in the fields of social and industrial psychology, for example in the area of "organizational climate" (Tagiuri & Litwin, 1968). Again, in the area of Community Psychology it is recognized that the clergy can perform an important function in effecting change and in providing therapeutic effectiveness. The clergy, by virtue of their role in the social environment, have an emotional significance for many people who constitute the target populations of proposed human potential change programs. Smith and Hobbs (1966) point out that by providing consultation to the governing agencies of the community--for example, schools, industry, and churches--therapeutic professionals can enlist the members of these significant groups as change-agents to help improve the quality of community and family life for all citizens. Certainly,

knowledge from research on the various problems involved in the structural and personnel functions within these groups would prove beneficial to such therapeutic programs.

Hinrichs (1970) has stated that research on the subject of "turnover" should attempt to deal with both individual difference factors and environmental features. This is in line with Miller's (1963) thinking on social interaction and also the view of Hunt (1965). Pervin (1967; Pervin & Rubin, 1967) used this approach in his studies of student-college interaction.

Results of a considerable number of studies suggest that personality characteristics play an important role in career preference and stability (Osipow, 1968). Significant among the attempts to relate personality to occupational preference is the theory postulated by Holland (1966).

In general, Holland holds that vocational choice is an expression of personality and, therefore, interest inventories can be viewed as personality inventories. Among Holland's basic assumptions are the following: 1) members of a vocation have similar personalities; and 2) vocational satisfaction and stability depend on the congruency between one's personality and the environment (composed largely of other people) in which one works.

According to Holland, in our culture most people can be classified as one of six types (Realistic, Intellectual, Social, Conventional, Enterprising, and Artistic). People possess characteristics of all six types, but each person operates in such a manner as

to reflect one or two of these orientations more strongly than the others. Consequently, the closer an individual resembles a particular type the more likely it is he will exhibit personality characteristics consistent with that type (Folsom, 1969). Holland (1970) developed an inventory, Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI) to assess these types. He expands the number of categories in his classification system from 6 to 30 by coding the highest type score and the second highest type score for each individual.

In addition, Holland (1966) claims that there are six basic model environments that correspond to the personality types (Realistic, Intellectual, Social, Conventional, Enterprising, and Artistic). For each personality type there is a related occupational environment.

A further assumption of Holland's theory is that congruent person-environment interactions (interaction of people and environments belonging to the same personality type or environmental model) lead to outcomes that are predictable from the knowledge of the personality types and the environmental models. These outcomes include vocational choice and vocational stability.

Personality code combinations are of two classes: 1) consistent--the highest types do not represent contradictory psychological attributes and promote stability of vocational choice; and 2) inconsistent--the two highest types indicate contradictory psychological attributes which will promote vocational changes and career instability. Holland predicts that individuals with inconsistent

patterns will be less capable of resisting external environmental pressures than are persons with consistent patterns.

Each model environment attracts that person whose dominant type is similar to the type associated with the environment. The consistency and homogeneity of an environment affects stability of vocational choice. A "consistent" environment is one which has a pattern that is psychologically and sociologically consistent. The "environmental pattern" can be assumed to be the profile of types obtained from the census of all types in an environment. Thus, the two-digit codes considered consistent personality patterns also indicate consistent environmental patterns.

Holland's (1966) research pertaining to his theory, as well as that of other investigators (Osipow, 1968; Folsom, 1969; Osipow, 1969; Southworth & Morningstar, 1970; Posthuma & Novran, 1970) indicate support for the theory and its constructs.

It would appear that Holland's theory provides a useful framework for the investigation of priestly vocational stability.

According to Holland's (1966) theory the churches can be conceptualized as "environments" (see also, Sells, 1968). For him, the church would be conceived as a "social environment" model type. Theoretically defined, the "social environment" type is characterized by problems that require the ability to interpret and modify human behavior and an interest for and communicating with others. Empirically described, the typical problems and situations are: the ability to interpret human behavior and to teach others; frequent,

prolonged personal relationships with others; persons receiving help or training convey status and affection to the person working in this environment; verbal facility is demanded for lecturing, teaching, and helping others; physical requirements are light--talking, reading, listening; ability to cope with a great range of types.

The instrument developed by Holland (1970), Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI) might be useful to differentiate between those priests who remain in the active ministry and those who resign. In addition, since Holland's (1966) conceptualization of the different personality types also includes associated personality characteristics, it would be profitable to also employ another instrument that would furnish information on personality variables. A widely used inventory in personality assessment research is the Adjective Check List (Gough & Heilbrun, 1965).

Statement of the Problem

Taken collectively, the foregoing introductory remarks point to the importance of understanding the problem of resignations from the priesthood. They also show that research data on this problem is sparse. Moreover, research already undertaken is either overly mixed with theoretical interpretations, or simply unavailable because unpublished.

Quite certainly research on this topic is difficult and complex because of the multitude of variables involved. Nevertheless, in spite of this complexity, it appears worthwhile to undertake objective research in this area, even if it is of limited scope.

The major purpose of this study was to investigate whether or not those priests who have resigned from the active ministry can be differentiated from those who remain within it in terms of personality variables and person-environment interaction factors as expressed in the theoretical framework of Holland (1966).

Since investigation of this area is still in its exploratory stage, it was difficult to formulate specific hypotheses. From the suggestions emerging from Holland's theory of vocational choice and vocational stability and from the available research data on resignations from the priesthood, the following, somewhat global, questions were investigated:

- 1) Is there a significant difference between active and resigned priests in terms of their scores on the "social" personality type dimension?
- 2) Is there a significant difference between active and resigned priests in terms of their code combinations of personality types?
- 3) Do active priests differ from resigned priests in terms of greater consistency of their code combinations?
- 4) Do active priests differ from resigned priests in terms of personological characteristics and needs?

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Subjects

Subjects for this study were fifty priests still active in the ministry and fifty resigned priests randomly selected from directories available to the researcher. Inclusion in the study was limited to those who served or are serving in the Southern part of the United States and who were not over the age of 45 years. In addition, for the resigned sample, only those who had voluntarily withdrawn from the ministry since the time of the Second Vatican Council were used.

Assessment Measures

1. Biographical Inventory. An inventory of biographical items, developed for this study was used (Appendix A).

2. Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI). Holland's (1970) inventory is composed entirely of occupational titles (Appendix B). The subject takes the inventory by indicating the occupations which he likes or dislikes, or indifferent to. The profile obtained from the inventory's scores indicates the individual's peaks on the six personality types (Realistic, Intellectual, Social, Conventional, Enterprising, Artistic), and also measures the individual on five additional scales (Self-control, Masculinity, Status, Infrequency, and

Acquiescence). Literature pertaining to the inventory's reliability, validity and use in research is provided in the manual (Holland, 1970) and in Buros (1970).

3. Adjective Check List (ACL). This instrument was originally constructed for use in the research program of the Institute for Personality Assessment and Research (IPAR). It consists of a standardized list of 300 adjectives. The respondent marks all the adjectives he considers to be descriptive of himself (Appendix C). It provides 24 scales indicating various personality characteristics and needs: 1) total number of adjectives checked; 2) defensiveness; 3) number of favorable adjectives checked; 4) number of unfavorable adjectives checked; 5) self-confidence; 6) self-control; 7) lability; 8) personal adjustment; 9) achievement; 10) dominance; 11) endurance; 12) order; 13) intraception; 14) nurturance; 15) affiliation; 16) heterosexuality; 17) exhibition; 18) autonomy; 19) aggression; 20) change; 21) succorance; 22) abasement; 23) deference; 24) counseling readiness. Literature pertaining to the instrument's reliability, validity and use in research is provided in the manual (Gough & Heilbrun, 1965) and in Buros (1970).

The criteria for selecting the VPI and the ACL were: 1) their construction and the resulting data appeared more adequate to test the implications of Holland's theory; and 2) their apparent neutral content avoids the negative reactions frequently provoked by "obvious" and lengthy personality inventories.

Procedure

Subjects were contacted and given the tests on an individual basis. The explanation given for the purpose of the study was that it was an investigation relating interests to self-descriptions. No names were required to be given on the answer sheets. The standardized instructions of the VPI and the ACL were employed.

Analysis of Data

Overall profile similarity was examined by separate multivariate analysis of variance procedures for the Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI) and for the Adjective Check List (ACL). Where it was appropriate, tests for the significance between means were used for the biographical items.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics of the Samples

The demographic characteristics of the samples are presented in Table 1. No significant differences between active and resigned priests were found in age, family's social position, number of children in the family, ordinal position, age at entrance to the seminary, or age at ordination to the priesthood.

The educational requirement for entrance into the priesthood is the fulfillment of a post-college, four-year theological program. Students may elect to obtain, in most theological schools, a master's level degree during the fourth year. Inspection of the biographical data of the subjects for this study showed that 17 (34%) of the active priests possessed MA's, nine of which were obtained at the completion of their theological courses. In addition, 8 (16%) of the active priests had pursued graduate courses. For resigned priests, one held a Ph.D, 28 (56%) held MA's (most obtained after leaving the priesthood), and 5 (10%) had taken some graduate courses.

The mean number of years of ministry for the resigned priests was 4.33 (SD=2.30). Forty-three (86%) of the resigned priests were married.

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES FOR ACTIVE AND RESIGNED PRIESTS

| Variable | Active | Resigned |
|---------------------------------------|--------|----------|
| Age | | |
| M | 31.18 | 32.66 |
| SD | 3.72 | 3.09 |
| Family's Social Position ^a | | |
| M | 42.92 | 46.00 |
| SD | 15.55 | 15.44 |
| Number of Children in Family | | |
| M | 4.30 | 4.58 |
| SD | 2.67 | 2.29 |
| Ordinal Position | | |
| (1) only child | 5 | 2 |
| (2) first born | 12 | 17 |
| (3) middle | 20 | 23 |
| (4) youngest | 13 | 8 |
| Age at Entrance to Seminary | | |
| M | 15.78 | 16.30 |
| SD | 4.32 | 2.76 |
| Age at Ordination | | |
| M | 26.10 | 26.16 |
| SD | 2.89 | 1.71 |

^aHollingshead's Two Factor Index of Social Position.

Comparison of Vocational Preference Inventory Scores

Table 2 contains the results of a multivariate analysis of variance and univariate tests of the Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI) scores using the Wilks Lambda Criterion for tests of significance.

The resigned priests' mean profile on the VPI followed the profile for active priests rather closely in general configuration (Figure 1). The six scales of the VPI which designate Holland's (1966) personality types (Realistic, Intellectual, Social, Conventional, Enterprising, Artistic) did not significantly discriminate between the two groups studied. Both groups, active and resigned priests, are characterized by a high social score (Social Type). Employing Holland's (1966) two-digit high-point codes, both groups are classified as 3-6 code types (Social-Artistic). Thus, the common two-digit high-point code for the total sample, active plus resigned priests, is social-artistic. On the remaining five scales of the VPI (Self-control, Masculinity, Status, Infrequency, Acquiescence), only one, the Self-control, scale significantly differentiated between the active and resigned samples. Inspection of the means of this scale (Table 3) indicates that resigned priests scored significantly higher ($p .01$) on self-control.

Additional examination of the means of the VPI (Table 3) indicates that on the six personality-type scales, the lowest mean score obtained by active priests was on the first scale, namely, the Realistic personality-type scale. Whereas, the lowest mean score obtained by the resigned priests was on the fourth scale, Conventional

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS OF VOCATIONAL PREFERENCE
INVENTORY (VPI) SCORES

| Multivariate Analysis of Variance Using Wilks Lambda Criterion | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------|
| Major Pattern | <u>F</u> | <u>df</u> (numerator) | <u>df</u> (error) | <u>p</u> |
| | 1.775 | 11.00 | 88.00 | .07 |
| Univariate <u>F</u> Tests | | | | |
| Variable | <u>F</u> (1/98) | <u>MS</u> | <u>p</u> | |
| Realistic | 0.782 | 453.690 | .38 | |
| Intellectual | 1.497 | 1004.890 | .22 | |
| Social | 0.002 | 1.000 | .96 | |
| Conventional | 0.026 | 12.960 | .87 | |
| Enterprising | 0.175 | 106.090 | .68 | |
| Artistic | 3.261 | 1772.409 | .07 | |
| Self-control | 6.704 | 4134.490 | .01* | |
| Masculinity | 0.023 | 7.290 | .88 | |
| Status | 0.750 | 542.890 | .39 | |
| Infrequency | 1.623 | 1115.560 | .20 | |
| Acquiescence | 3.087 | 1962.490 | .08 | |

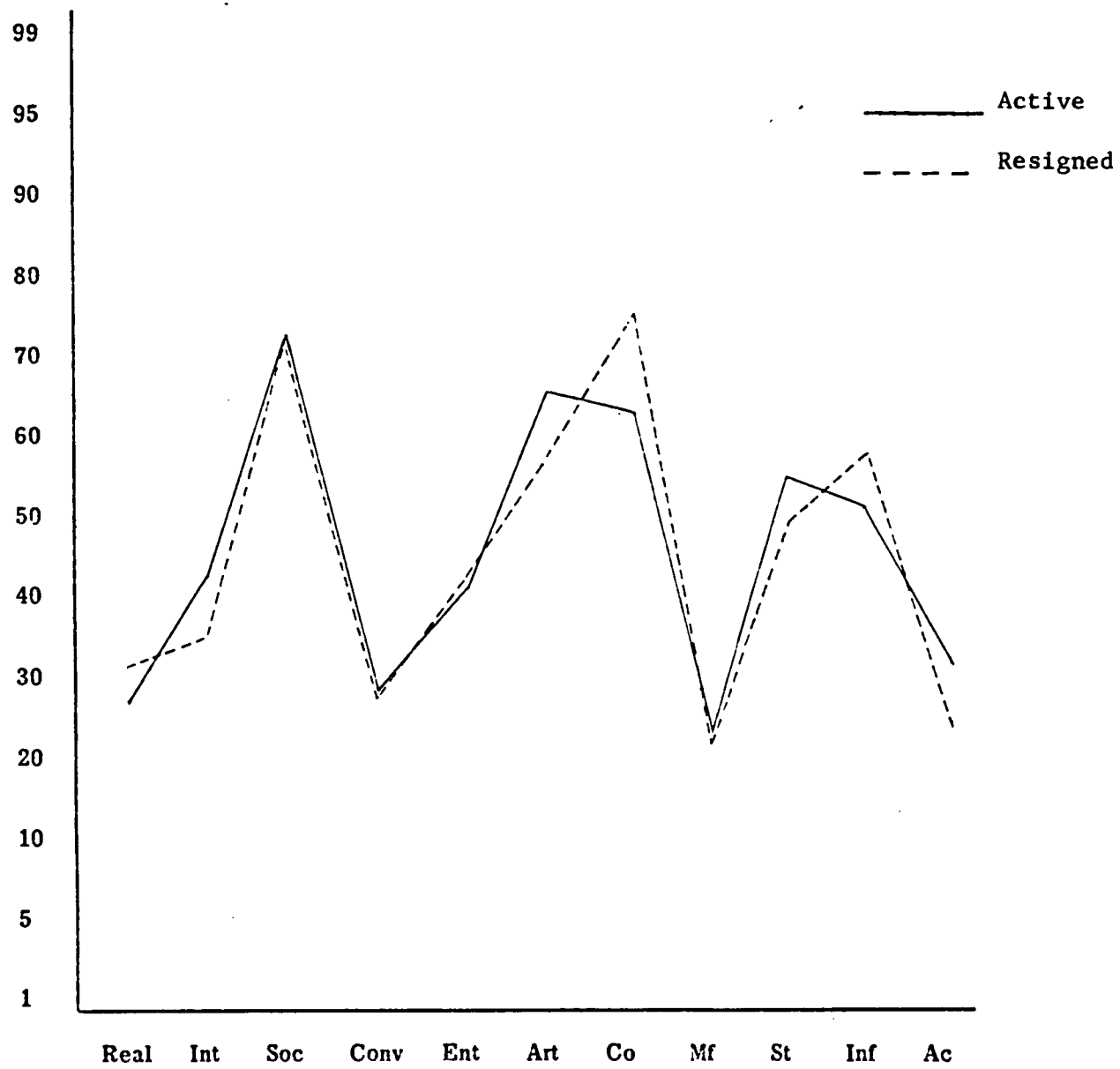


Figure 1. Mean VPI Profile Scores for Active and Resigned Priests.

TABLE 3
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF VPI SCORES
FOR ACTIVE AND RESIGNED PRIESTS

| Variable | Active | Resigned |
|---------------------|--------|----------|
| Realistic | | |
| M | 27.56 | 31.82 |
| SD | 22.62 | 25.47 |
| Intellectual | | |
| M | 42.02 | 35.68 |
| SD | 26.28 | 25.53 |
| Social | | |
| M | 72.40 | 72.20 |
| SD | 25.63 | 18.68 |
| Conventional | | |
| M | 29.22 | 28.50 |
| SD | 23.87 | 20.76 |
| Enterprising | | |
| M | 40.28 | 42.34 |
| SD | 24.15 | 25.08 |
| Artistic | | |
| M | 65.42 | 57.00 |
| SD | 25.54 | 20.86 |
| Self-control | | |
| M | 62.28 | 75.14 |
| SD | 26.68 | 22.84 |

TABLE 3 (Continued)

| Variable | Active | Resigned |
|---------------------|--------|----------|
| Masculinity | | |
| M | 23.30 | 22.76 |
| SD | 20.06 | 15.22 |
| Status | | |
| M | 54.36 | 49.70 |
| SD | 25.98 | 27.81 |
| Infrequency | | |
| M | 51.32 | 58.00 |
| SD | 25.07 | 27.32 |
| Acquiescence | | |
| M | 32.92 | 24.06 |
| SD | 25.75 | 24.66 |

personality-type scale. On the remaining five scales of Holland's inventory (Self-control, Masculinity, Status, Infrequency, Acquiescence) the lowest mean score for both active and resigned priests was on the eighth scale (Masculinity).

Comparison of the Adjective Check List Scores

Table 4 contains the results of a multivariate analysis of variance and univariate tests of the Adjective Check List (ACL) scores using the Wilks Lambda Criterion for tests of significance.

The resigned priests' mean profile on the ACL followed the profile for active priests rather closely in general configuration (Figure 2). Scores for both groups, active and resigned, can be considered to fall within the average range.

Of the twenty-four scales which make up the Adjective Check List, five scales significantly discriminated between the active and resigned priests: Self-confidence ($p .04$); Achievement ($p .001$); Dominance ($p .002$); Endurance ($p .001$); Order ($p .001$). Inspection of the means of the Adjective Check List (Table 5) for these five scales indicates that resigned priests score significantly higher on the Self-confidence, Achievement, Dominance, Endurance, and Order scales.

Specifically, with regard to the questions asked in this study:

1. Is there a significant difference between active and resigned priests in terms of their scores on the "social" personality-type dimension?

The results of the analysis of the VPI (Table 2; Table 3)

TABLE 4
SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS OF ADJECTIVE
CHECK LIST (ACL) SCORES

| Multivariate Analysis of Variance Using Wilks Lambda Criterion | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------|
| Major Pattern | <u>F</u> | <u>df</u> (numerator) | <u>df</u> (error) | <u>p</u> |
| | 2.114 | 24.00 | 75.00 | .008 |
| Univariate <u>F</u> Tests | | | | |
| Variable | <u>F</u> (1/98) | <u>MS</u> | | <u>p</u> |
| Total checked | 2.828 | 285.610 | | .10 |
| Defensiveness | 3.528 | 193.210 | | .06 |
| Favorable | 2.478 | 123.210 | | .12 |
| Unfavorable | 0.233 | 7.840 | | .63 |
| Self-confidence | 4.409 | 384.160 | | .04* |
| Self-control | 2.671 | 139.240 | | .11 |
| Lability | 1.912 | 187.690 | | .17 |
| Personal adjustment | 0.648 | 37.210 | | .42 |
| Achievement | 19.173 | 1082.410 | | .001* |
| Dominance | 10.185 | 676.000 | | .002* |
| Endurance | 12.334 | 620.010 | | .001* |
| Order | 15.850 | 852.640 | | .001* |
| Intracception | 0.033 | 2.560 | | .86 |
| Nurturance | 0.532 | 28.090 | | .47 |
| Affiliation | 0.769 | 34.810 | | .38 |

TABLE 4 (Continued)

| Major Pattern | <u>F</u> | <u>df</u> (numerator) | <u>df</u> (error) | <u>p</u> |
|------------------|----------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------|
| | 2.114 | 24.00 | 75.00 | .008 |

Univariate F Tests (Continued)

| Variable | <u>F</u> (1/98) | <u>MS</u> | <u>p</u> |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------|
| Heterosexuality | 0.564 | 59.290 | .46 |
| Exhibition | 0.758 | 56.250 | .39 |
| Autonomy | 0.061 | 4.410 | .81 |
| Aggression | 1.503 | 96.040 | .22 |
| Change | 0.233 | 20.250 | .63 |
| Succorance | 0.036 | 2.250 | .85 |
| Abasement | 3.253 | 187.690 | .07 |
| Deference | 0.077 | 4.840 | .78 |
| Counseling readiness | 1.748 | 116.640 | .19 |

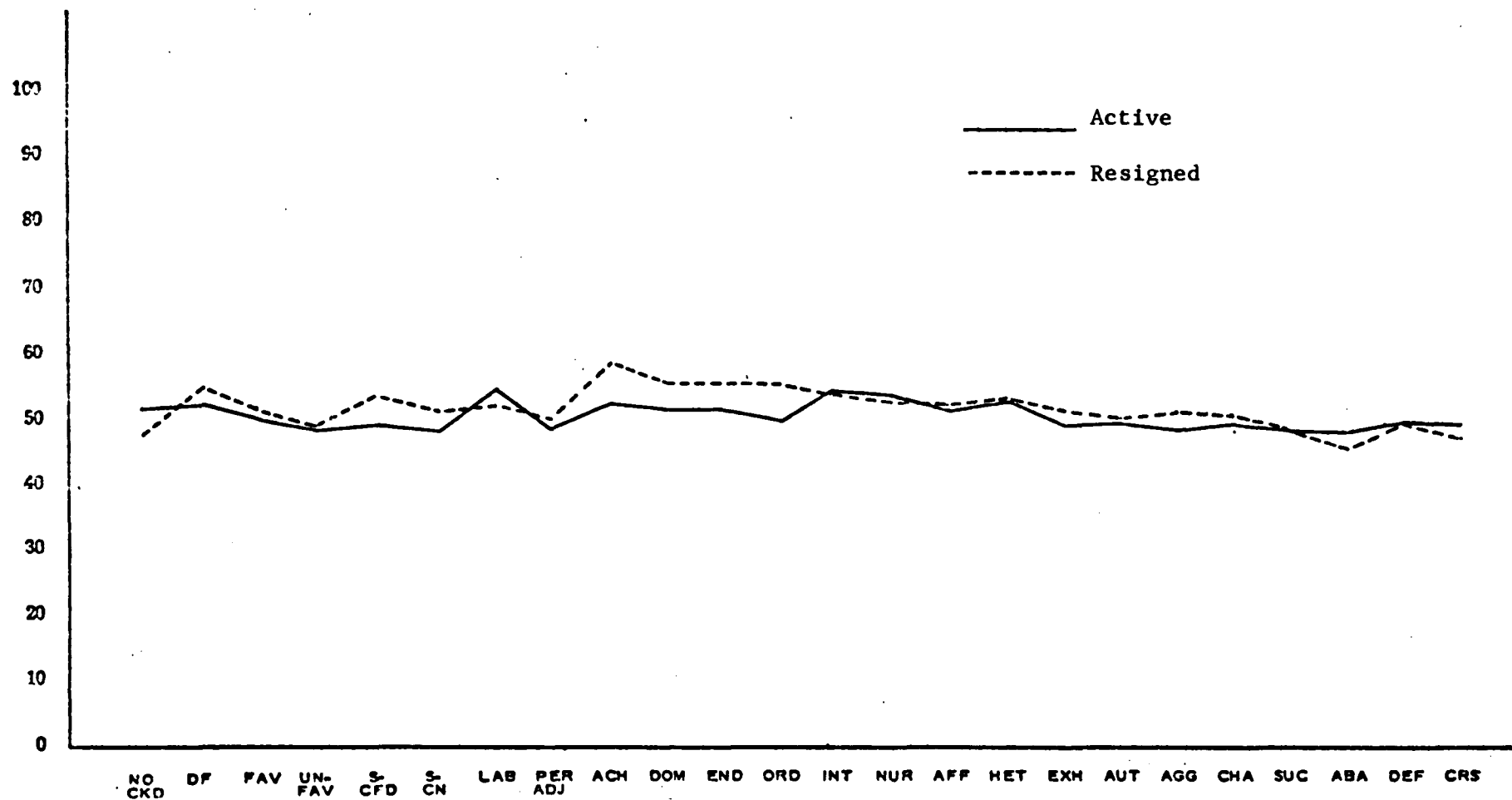


Figure 2. Mean ACL Profile Scores for Active and Resigned Priests.

TABLE 5
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF ACL SCORES
FOR ACTIVE AND RESIGNED PRIESTS

| Variable | Active | Resigned |
|----------------|--------|----------|
| No. Ckd | | |
| M | 50.92 | 47.54 |
| SD | 11.71 | 8.05 |
| Df | | |
| M | 51.54 | 54.32 |
| SD | 7.14 | 7.66 |
| Fav | | |
| M | 48.98 | 51.20 |
| SD | 7.56 | 6.51 |
| Unfav | | |
| M | 48.20 | 48.76 |
| SD | 6.13 | 5.45 |
| S-Cfd | | |
| M | 49.12 | 53.04 |
| SD | 9.48 | 9.18 |
| S-Cn | | |
| M | 48.22 | 50.58 |
| SD | 7.49 | 6.94 |
| Lab | | |
| M | 54.10 | 51.36 |
| SD | 10.17 | 9.64 |

TABLE 5 (Continued)

| Variable | Active | Resigned |
|----------|--------|----------|
| Per Adj | | |
| M | 48.60 | 49.82 |
| SD | 8.09 | 7.04 |
| Ach | | |
| M | 51.74 | 58.32 |
| SD | 7.34 | 7.69 |
| Dom | | |
| M | 50.68 | 55.88 |
| SD | 8.48 | 7.80 |
| End | | |
| M | 50.68 | 55.66 |
| SD | 6.70 | 7.46 |
| Ord | | |
| M | 49.50 | 55.34 |
| SD | 7.54 | 7.12 |
| Int | | |
| M | 54.10 | 53.78 |
| SD | 8.47 | 9.16 |
| Nur | | |
| M | 53.56 | 52.50 |
| SD | 7.76 | 6.74 |

TABLE 5 (Continued)

| Variable | Active | Resigned |
|------------|--------|----------|
| Aff | | |
| M | 50.62 | 51.80 |
| SD | 6.71 | 6.74 |
| Het | | |
| M | 52.26 | 53.80 |
| SD | 11.19 | 9.28 |
| Exh | | |
| M | 49.10 | 50.60 |
| SD | 9.96 | 7.02 |
| Aut | | |
| M | 49.44 | 49.86 |
| SD | 9.53 | 7.40 |
| Agg | | |
| M | 48.88 | 50.84 |
| SD | 8.68 | 7.24 |
| Cha | | |
| M | 49.24 | 50.14 |
| SD | 10.05 | 8.54 |
| Suc | | |
| M | 48.76 | 48.46 |
| SD | 6.56 | 9.04 |

TABLE 5 (Continued)

| Variable | Active | Resigned |
|------------|--------|----------|
| Aba | | |
| M | 48.30 | 45.56 |
| SD | 7.34 | 7.85 |
| Def | | |
| M | 49.66 | 49.22 |
| SD | 8.68 | 7.12 |
| Crs | | |
| M | 49.32 | 47.16 |
| SD | 8.56 | 7.76 |

undertaken in this study clearly show that the highest peak (Figure 1) on Holland's (1970) inventory for both groups, active and resigned priests, is the Social personality-type. Consequently, active and resigned priests do not significantly differ on this scale.

Indeed, the results give support to Holland's (1966) general hypothesis that members of a vocation have similar personalities as measured by his inventory (Holland, 1970). For him, the "social" personality, conceptually defined, copes with his environment by selecting goals, values, and tasks in which he can use his skills with an interest in other persons in order to train or change their behavior. The "social" type is concerned with the welfare of dependent persons: the poor, uneducated, sick, unstable, young, and aged. This personality-type seeks occupational environments classified in Holland's (1966) system as the social-model environment; one of which is church-work.

Biographical data on the resigned priests revealed that 40 (80%) are presently occupying positions which can be classified as social-model types (counseling, social work, etc.). For this group, Holland (1966) would label their change of occupation an "intra-class change," namely, when a person moves to an occupation in the same general class as his original choice.

2. Is there a significant difference between active and resigned priests in terms of their code combinations of personality types?

The results of the analyses of the VPI scores (Table 2;

Table 3) undertaken in the present investigation show that both active and resigned priests are to be classified with the two-digit high point code of 3-6 (Social-Artistic). Thus, no significant difference exists between active and resigned priests on the two-digit high point code combination.

This finding is congruent with Holland's (1966) experimental classification for vocational occupations. Church-work (clergy) is listed as an illustration of a 3-6 code occupation.

Examination of the analyses of the VPI (Table 2) scores indicates, however, what might be considered a trend toward a significant difference between active and resigned priests on the Artistic scale ($p .07$). Active priests have a higher mean score on the Artistic scale than resigned priests (Table 3).

3. Do active priests differ from resigned priests in terms of greater consistency of their code combinations?

Results show that both active and resigned priests are to be classified according to the two-digit high point code system as 3-6 (Social-Artistic). For Holland (1966) consistency of a code is a function of the similarities between the primary and secondary types. In other words, the highest types do not represent contradictory psychological attributes and promote stability of vocational choice. The 3-6 code combination is listed by Holland (1966) as a consistent code.

4. Do active priests differ from resigned priests in terms of personological characteristics and needs?

The results of the analyses of the ACL (Table 4; Table 5) scores undertaken in the present study show that on five of the twenty-four scales of the ACL there exists a significant difference between active and resigned priests. Inspection of mean scores (Table 5) indicates that resigned priests scored significantly higher than active priests on the Self-confidence, Achievement, Dominance, Endurance, and Order scales. Scores for both groups, active and resigned, however, may be considered to fall within the average range (Figure 2).

Table 4 also indicates a possible trend toward a significant difference between active and resigned priests on the Defensiveness scale ($p .06$). An examination of the means for this scale (Table 5) shows resigned priests with a higher mean score. Again, on the Abasement scale ($p .07$), active priests have a higher mean score than resigned priests.

For the active priests, the ten self-descriptive adjectives most frequently checked were:

- active (90%)
- adaptable (90%)
- cheerful (88%)
- capable (86%)
- clear-thinking (86%)
- civilized (84%)
- cooperative (84%)
- dependable (82%)

forgiving (80%)

responsible (80%)

For the resigned priests, the ten self-descriptive adjectives most frequently checked were:

active (92%)

adaptable (90%)

capable (90%)

cooperative (90%)

dependable (88%)

appreciative (86%)

fair-minded (84%)

alert (82%)

conscientious (82%)

civilized (78%).

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to investigate whether or not those priests who have resigned from the active ministry can be differentiated from those who remain within it in terms of personality variables and person-environment interaction factors as expressed in the theoretical framework of Holland's theory of vocational choice (1966).

The investigation found that resigned priests were similar to active priests in most of the demographic characteristics. There were no significant differences between the two samples in age, family's social position, number of children in the family, ordinal position, age at entrance to the seminary, or age at ordination to the priesthood. This similarity of demographic profiles allowed for a closely matched pair of samples. The fact that 86% of the resigned priest sample are married, can not be taken, from the data of this study, to mean that marriage was a major reason for their resignation from the ministry. However, there is indication from the NORC (1971; Greeley, 1972) study that a most frequently mentioned reason for leaving the priesthood is a desire to marry.

A marked similarity of profiles on the Vocational Preference Inventory (Holland, 1970) of the active and resigned priests was found.

Both groups had their highest profile peak on the Social personality-type scale and the same two-digit high point personality combination "3-6" (Social-Artistic). Thus, the six personality-type scales of the VPI did not significantly discriminate between active and resigned priests. On the other hand, the findings of the present study were supportive of the general hypothesis, proposed by Holland (1966), that people search for environments and vocations that permit them to satisfy and express their personalities. Furthermore the biographical data which showed that 80% of the resigned priests are presently occupying positions which can be classified as social-model types (counseling, social work, etc.) may be viewed not as a major change in occupational choice, but rather, as Holland (1966) terms it, an "intra-class change," namely, the selection of an occupation in the same general class as the original choice. Given the fact that another frequently given reason for resignation from the priesthood is problems with Church structures and some ecclesiastical tasks (NORC, 1971), the present rate of resignations may be, in part, the currently greater possibility to implement Moore's (1962) axiom: "The best protection of any employee against either objective exploitation or subjective suffocation is the existence of alternative opportunities" (p. 179).

Holland's (1966) theory for the classification of the model environments is based on the assumption that environment is basically transmitted through people. Consequently, the character of an environment is dependent upon the nature of its members and the dominant

features of an environment are dependent upon the typical characteristics of its members. Therefore, if it is known what kind of people make up a group, then, according to Holland (1966), an inference can be made as to the climate that group creates. The present findings would indicate that the priesthood "environment" is composed of 3-6 personality types (Social-Artistic).

The one scale of the VPI which did significantly discriminate between the active priests and the resigned priests was the Self-controlled scale. The resigned priests had a higher mean score than the active priests ($p < .01$). The score for this scale is based on the number of "dislike" responses to occupations involving fairly grave risk (deep sea diver, prize fighter, etc.), Holland (1970) claims it supposedly measures what is generally meant by self-control, or inhibition of impulses to act out motivation. Since the mean scores of both groups, active and resigned, fall within the average range which Holland interprets to be associated with a healthy spontaneity in living when associated with other positive signs, the interpretation here might be that resigned priests are somewhat more cautious than active priests.

Another finding of this study was that resigned priests significantly differ from active priests on five scales of the Adjective Check List (Gough & Heilbrun, 1965). Scores for both groups are basically within the average range. Resigned priests, however, had mean scores significantly higher on Self-confidence ($p < .04$); Achievement ($p < .001$); Dominance ($p < .002$); Endurance ($p < .001$); and Order ($p < .001$).

Detailed interpretations of these scales and the polarities of high versus low scores may be found in the Adjective Check List's Manual (Gough & Heilbrun, 1965). Here, a brief definition of the scale and description of the high-scorer is given.

Self-confidence. The higher the score on the self-confidence scale the more an individual tends to assertive, affiliative, outgoing, persistent, and actionistic. The high-scorer is described as one who wants to get things done, and is impatient with people or things standing in his way.

Achievement. This is defined as the striving to be outstanding in pursuits of socially recognized significance. The high-scorer is seen as intelligent, hard-working, one who is determined to do well and usually succeeds. In addition, the high-scorer's motives are internal and goal-centered rather than competitive.

Dominance. This is defined as the seeking and sustaining of leadership roles in groups or to be influential and controlling in individual relationships. The high-scorer is seen as forceful, strong-willed, and persevering individual. One who is confident in his ability and direct in his behavior.

Endurance. This is defined as persisting in any task undertaken. High-scorers are typically self-controlled and responsible, but also idealistic and concerned about truth and justice. By nature conventional, the high-scorer may nevertheless find himself championing unconventional ideas and unpopular causes.

Order. This is defined as placing special emphasis on neatness, organization, and planning in one's activities. High-scorers are usually sincere and dependable, but sometimes at the cost of individuality and spontaneity.

A most difficult question to answer is whether or not the personological characteristics manifested in self-report descriptions of those who have resigned from the priesthood are due to experiences after the resignation. However, there is an indication from the psychological study, conducted simultaneously with the NORC (1971; Greeley, 1972) study that suggests the differences noted above may be of a more basic and persistent personality dimension. In that psychological study of priests still active in the ministry (Greeley, 1972) it was found that there is a slight relationship between an "inner-directed" personality score ("guided by internal motivations rather than external influences") and an inclination to resign from the ministry. This was measured by means of Shostrom's (1966) Personal Orientation Inventory. Furthermore, as Greeley (1972) points out, describing that same psychological study of active priests:

It appears that there is a tendency for resignees to be hyper-actualized, and for those who remain to be hypoactualized. In other words, some of those who leave the priesthood show excessive needs for independence, and some of those who stay show excessive needs for dependence, which suggests that some men leave because they are overactualized and some men stay because they are underactualized (p. 43).

It is quite possible that the cluster of scales (Self-confidence, Achievement, Dominance, Endurance, and Order) which significantly differentiated between the active and resigned priests of

this study's samples may be comparable to the "inner-directed" personality scores found in the psychological study of active priests as part of the NORC (1971) project. However, such comparisons must await the publication of that study and further research.

In view of the fact that the present study was exploratory, conclusions drawn from the results must be of a tentative nature. Results do suggest, however, that future research into the problem of resignations from the priesthood take into account the apparent homogeneity of interest patterns of members of the priesthood and seek the causes for "intraclass change" in terms of specific situational and personological variables. For example, the question of whether or not the present state of the ministry provides a context suitable for the person with a high need for achievement? The results of the present study also suggest that Holland's (1970) Vocational Preference Inventory, given more research, might prove to be an effective instrument to aid in the vocational counseling of those who express a wish to enter the priesthood.

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A P P E N D I C E S

APPENDIX A

BIOGRAPHICAL INVENTORY (Active Priest)

1. Age at last birthday: _____
2. In your family, were you: only child _____
oldest child _____
middle child _____
youngest child _____
3. Number of children in your family _____
4. Father's occupation: _____
5. Father's last year of school completed: _____
6. Age when you entered seminary: _____
7. Age at ordination to priesthood: _____
8. Education or Degree beyond seminary training:
(1) _____
(2) _____
(3) _____
(4) _____

BIOGRAPHICAL INVENTORY (Resigned Priest)

Note: In addition to the above items, the following were included on the Inventory for the "resigned priest":

9. Length of service in the priesthood: _____
10. Age when you withdrew from institutional priesthood: _____
11. Married: _____
Single: _____
12. Present occupation: _____

PLEASE NOTE:

Pages 47-51, "The Vocational Preference Inventory", ©1965 by John L. Holland and "The Adjective Check List", c 1952 by Harrison G. Gough not microfilmed at request of author. Available for consultation at Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College Library.

UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS.

VITA

Thomas V. Gilbride was born in New York City, New York on May 6, 1929, the youngest of five children born to William and Margaret Gilbride. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy from Marist College, Framingham Centre, Mass. in 1953. In 1960, he received the Master of Arts degree in Psychology from the Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C. In 1968, he received the doctorate in Theology from the Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C. He completed the requirements for the Doctoral degree in Psychology at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana and is a candidate for this degree at the summer commencement, 1972.

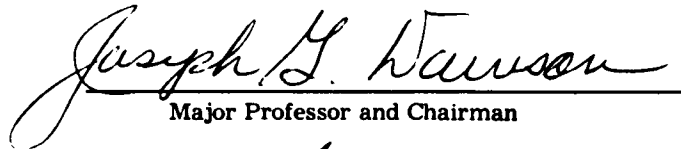
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: THOMAS V. GILBRIDE

Major Field: PSYCHOLOGY

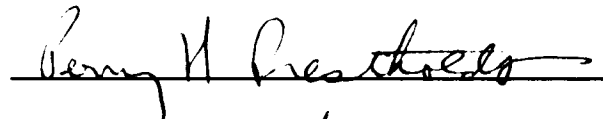
Title of Thesis: A STUDY OF PERSISTING AND NONPERSISTING CATHOLIC
CLERGYMEN

Approved:

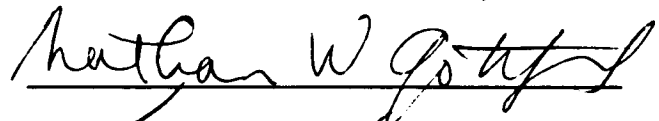

Major Professor and Chairman


Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:









Date of Examination:

JUNE 12, 1972